
Construction resumes for treatment plant expansion

The project team is glad to be back at work on the upgrades to the Vashon Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Construction was temporarily halted in January after a shallow surface soil sample was found with low to moderate levels of arsenic, lead and cadmium.

Various studies show that soils on portions of Vashon and Maury islands, coastal areas of south King County, and portions of Pierce County have elevated concentrations of arsenic, lead and cadmium, presumably from copper smelting at the Asarco plant in Ruston, which operated from 1890 to 1986.



Construction crews are back to work on the Vashon Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades.

After the January 2005 soil sample showed levels of potential concern, scientists took 90 samples throughout the site to determine the extent of metals contamination. Three areas on the treatment plant site showed slightly elevated metal levels. A soil management plan was developed to address the safety of workers, the public and the environment. Soil from these areas were moved to a parcel owned by King County just south of the treatment plant construction site. These piles of dirt were then covered with a foot of clean soil and have been hydroseeded. This plan followed guidelines outlined by the state Department of Ecology and the Area-Wide Soil Contamination Task Force.

Schedule and budget impacts

The contractor estimates that the Vashon Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade construction will be completed by the fall of 2006.

A change order was required to deal with the soil contamination portion of the project. That has been negotiated and will add about \$480,000 to the project budget. Increased project costs will be shared by all King County's sewer ratepayers. Rates to Vashon Sewer District are limited by a fixed formula in the sewage disposal agreement between the district and the county.

Resources on smelter metals

For more information, check the following Web sites:

- Public Health--Seattle and King County has some excellent tips on soil safety guidelines for inside and outside your home. Check its Web site at <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/tsp/index.htm> or call 206-296-4692.
- The Washington Department of Ecology Web site can be found at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/tacoma_smelter/ts_hp.htm.

Project overview

Vashon Sewer District contracted with King County in 1999 to treat the wastewater of its customers. Then, the system was experiencing many violations of the plant's discharge permits for not meeting effluent standards. King County's expertise in wastewater treatment and financing was needed to solve serious problems.

The county carried out many interim steps to improve the plant operation. The plant is now doing an adequate job and rarely experiences violations. However, it is at capacity for the amount of incoming waste and flows and doesn't have sufficient backup systems. Without these backup systems, if one piece of the system malfunctions, the quality of treatment will be jeopardized and repairs could be extremely costly.

The plant upgrades will increase capacity and add and enhance backup systems. After three years of community outreach, design and permitting, construction on the treatment plant upgrades began in the fall of 2004. Moving the marine outfall farther out in Puget Sound was completed in October 2004. A delay because contaminated soil was found on site halted the plant upgrade project from January through March of 2005, but implementation of a soil management plan and construction began again in April 2005.

The Vashon Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades and improvements are needed to meet regulatory requirements and will protect human health and the environment.

For more information:

- Contact Jo Sullivan by phone at 206-296-8361 or e-mail at jo.sullivan@metrokc.gov.
- Call the 24-hour hotline at **206-205-9181**.
- Check the Web at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wtd/vashon>

Alternative formats on request by calling 206-296-8361 (voice) or 711 (TTY).



King County

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Vashon Wastewater Treatment Plant

Project Update